How to Use This Manual…

- Each page demonstrates different steps in the necropsy procedure
- Follow the pages in order
- Dotted lines mean “Cut here”
- “Sample” means take a piece of tissue as shown and place in appropriate fixative (usually formalin). Always sample normal and abnormal
- Tissues for fixation should be no thicker than 1cm.
- Take photographs of abnormalities.
1. Examine Teeth, note any abnormalities
2. Examine animal.
Check for any wounds, external parasites, hair loss or other abnormalities. Check joints for movement and feel bones for fractures.

Take a sample of skin and any skin lesions.
3. Open joints so carcass lies flat.

4. Cut just through the skin from chin to genital area.
5. Peel back body wall by cutting attachments between skin and underlying tissues..

6. Take a sample of the mammary glands (females) through the center of the gland to include the nipple.
7. Open abdominal cavity. Remove tissue off of ribcage.
8. Remove ribcage.
9. Cut through the muscle from under chin and neck so you can see the larynx (voice box).
10. Cut around tongue and pull the tongue out of the head. Use tongue to pull out trachea, esophagus, lungs, and heart (the pluck). Cut off esophagus, aorta and vena cava at diaphragm.

Remove the pluck from the body.
11. Cut the tongue into multiple pieces to examine muscle. 
Take one sample.

12. Sample both the right and left thyroid gland. 
There is one thyroid on each side of the trachea.
13. Sample tracheobronchial lymph nodes.

14. Open and sample trachea.
15. Open and sample esophagus.
16. Cut the lung into multiple pieces to examine.

Take one sample from the cranial, middle and caudal portions of the lung.
17. Open the sac around the heart (the pericardial sac.)

18. Sample the aorta.
19. Cut open heart.

Sample through both ventricles.
20. Remove abdominal organs (Liver, Spleen, Stomach, and Intestines) from the body.
21. Detach spleen from stomach.

Cut the spleen into multiple pieces to examine and sample.
22. Open gall bladder and examine contents.
Sample gall bladder.

23. Cut the liver into multiple pieces to examine.
Sample the liver in two locations.
24. Lay out gastrointestinal tract and sample at multiple sites.
25. Remove and sample both the left and right kidney.
26. Remove and sample both the right and left adrenal gland.
Female Reproductive Tract

Urinary Bladder
27. Sample the urinary bladder. In male primates, also take a sample of the prostate.
28. In females, take a sample of ½ the uterus with the ovary.
In males, take a sample of each testicle with epididymis.
29. Remove the head from the body.
30. Using a saw, cut the skull to open.
31. Remove the brain from the skull. Place in fixative whole – do not cut.

32. Remove pituitary gland and place in fixative whole.
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